



# **San Rafael Village**

## **Quarterly Newsletter – Fall 2018**

### **Special 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition**

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### **San Rafael Village 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Recognition of our Amazing and Dedicated Volunteers**

San Rafael Village (SRV) celebrated the 5th anniversary of its founding on August 28th with a festive, entertaining and upbeat party at the McInnis Golf Club restaurant. The room was bursting with energy. Balloons floated on white tablecloth-covered tables and an outstanding buffet offered a wide array of tasty snacks, from stuffed mushrooms to meatballs and fresh veggies. A busy cash bar kept the wine and drinks flowing and augmented the light, happy mood.

Volunteer Program organizers, Chris Asimos and Patti McWilliams, outdid themselves with a program that combined history, quizzes and lots of laughter. SRV founding co-chairs, Jane Solomons and Carole Sherick, recapped our village's background – growing from its first coffee with 30 people five years ago to our current roster of over 150 members and volunteers. Over this time, our programs, activities and social events have mushroomed – as have our requests for service and support, now 5 times greater than when SRV started. This celebration demonstrated our enormous appreciation of our volunteers without whom none of this would be possible. fun

Chris and Patti organized a very clever history quiz and a delightful “guess this song” contest of oldies but goodies. It was hilarious – including the singing by a few of our members. Who knew we had such talent? Sparkie Spaeth, current SRV Chair, outlined plans for future growth, including more inter-village activities, a close relationship with the Age-Friendly movement and intergenerational events.



**Sparkie Spaeth with Ginni Saunders**



**Mitzi Kemp with Patti McWilliams**

With the energy and spirit evident in the room, we look forward to growth and new activities aimed at advancing the mission of the Marin villages – to help older adults to stay active, connected and independent in the place they call home; to make everyday life easier as we age, to enrich each other’s lives and make new friends – and to share the fun and social joys of celebrations like our 5th Anniversary blast.

We are grateful for the support of local establishments: Gift Certificates donated by San Rafael Joe’s (\$50), Miracle Mile Café (\$40), and Scotty’s Market (\$100) – plus bottles of wine from Patti McWilliams and Lorraine Peters. And cash donations from anonymous villagers added another \$138. Every little bit helps!

## **San Rafael Villagers' Death Café**

### **Taking the Taboo of Death “Out of the Closet”**

Over the past few months, the SRV Death Café has proved to be an incredibly popular and valuable event. The Death Café is truly offering a proactive tool for sharing attitudes on death (and their origin ), ways of coping with loved ones in denial (and solutions), issues, legalities, and practices regarding assisted death, belief (or lack of) related to God and spirit, fears (and mechanisms to allay them), the practicalities of supporting loved ones dying, and embracing the practical aspects of close of life preparation for the participants.

Believers and non-believers in attendance have left feeling lighter, and grateful for the experience. Each participant has welcomed the issues and experience of the others, and laughter and commiseration keep the events remarkably lively.

Held at the gracious home of Rhea Wolkowitz and facilitated by Jackie Hewitt (with two decades of hospice grief and caregiving experience) the collective spirit of open sharing, problem solving, and revelation creates an animated and intimate two-hour session. The Death Café has become so popular that early sign-up is advised since space is limited. Flyers will continue to alert everyone to the next upcoming Death Café. This is a fantastic addition to our monthly SRV activities!

## **San Rafael / Novato Potluck Picnic in the Park**

It was a perfect September Sunday afternoon when 14 villagers from San Rafael and Novato Villages gathered to share delicious food prepared by all participants. Everyone enjoyed salads, entrees, an array of desserts - and even a cauliflower cake! - as the group sat around a picnic table under the trees in Miwok Park in Novato. Wine, lemonade and San Pellegrino lubricated the festivities and lively conversations flew back and forth between new and old friends. A game of Eclectic Trivia added to the fun, with the winner taking home a \$25 gift certificate donated by Safeway. This is an experience all agreed to repeat!



Animated conversations while picnicking in the Park

## **Carole Sherick Honored Nancy Forster Spirit of Marin Villages Awardee**



Carole was nominated by the SRV Steering Committee and others for her dedication, enthusiasm and passion for the Marin Villages mission. She exemplifies the qualities exhibited by Nancy Forster, a pioneer in the founding of the organization.

As one of the top service providers, Carole drives members, walks dogs, does companion visits, takes members to Farmers Market and much more. She was co-chair of SRV for its first three years and, for the past two, she has chaired the Program Committee Under her guidance, SRV has steadily developing new and exciting programs to provide cultural activities, social connections and just plain fun for SRV members and volunteers.

As member Gloria Wilcox said, "Carole is firmly dedicated to the principles of the Villages. She lives them with enthusiasm and joy and always with her sunny side up. She makes a big difference in my well-being and happiness as a senior."

## Visit to the “Floating White House”

In the White House of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, each member of the household was given a code name by the Secret Service assigned to protect them. Who do you think got the code name “The Informer”?

If you were on the San Rafael Villagers’ outing on October 11th, you’d have the answer. SR Villagers were treated to an entertaining and enlightened glimpse into the life of FDR during a tour of the USS Potomac, “the floating White House,” the yacht he used during his presidency to meet with royal visitors, foreign dignitaries and cabinet members, as well as for his own relaxation.



The Potomac, now moored at Oakland’s Jack London Square, is open to the public for tours and cruises. And Villagers who boarded it got to explore the vessel, learn its history and pick up some intriguing tid-bits about FDR’s world. Who would have known that “The Informer” was the Secret Service’s name for the President’s dog Fala, whose potty breaks while traveling by train with the FDR often give away the President’s whereabouts!

After the tour, Villagers enjoyed lunch at the nearby restaurant, Kincaid’s, overlooking the harbor before returning home to Marin. “What a treat” was the assessment of a day well spent by intrepid Villagers.



## Monthly Coffees – a Regular SRV Event

Hosted by a rotating roster of SRV members or volunteers, our monthly coffees – the first Wednesday of every month - have become a beloved staple of SRV. Now held from 2:00 to 4:00 pm – more an afternoon “tea” than a morning coffee – these gatherings have proved popular for many villagers: a way to relax, enjoy meeting friends and making new acquaintances. With no agenda, villagers just chat and sip and nibble while enjoying the lovely, gracious homes of the hosts.

On September 5<sup>th</sup>, the event was held at the beautiful home of the SRV Chair, Sparkie Spaeth. On a hot afternoon, Sparkie’s deck was the perfect spot for all to gather. Umbrellas provided some shade – and Sparkie even provided hats for those who came unprepared for the sun!



## Welcome New Members and Volunteers – July, Aug. & Sept.

**Members:** Kitty Miao; Mary Vetromile, Jeanne Boucher, Kathy Barrass, Lynne Nebenzahl, Gloria Chertock, Ulla and Bill Chandler, Tom and Lucina Tison, Roey Berman, Sarah Mollison

**Volunteers:** Marcy Dubova, Judith Dennings, Ken Lai, Christine and Nola Gabbard, Donna Posard, Lincoln Chris